Epistemology comes before all other ethical foundations because labeling things moral or immoral is just a function of our knowledge. We need to know *how* we know what right and wrong are before we can pick the best definition. **And**, a priori reasoning is impossible so the only epistemologically sound basis for Morality is experience. **Schwartz**:[[1]](#footnote-1)

The empirical support for the fundamental principle of empiricism is diffuse but salient. Our common empirical **experience and** experimental **psychology offer evidence that humans do not have any capacity to garner knowledge except by empirical sources.** The fact is that we believe that **there is no source of knowledge**, information, or evidence **apart from observation**, empirical scientific investigations, and our sensory experience of the world, and we believe this on the basis of our empirical a posteriori experiences and our general empirical view of how things work. For example, we believe on empirical evidence that **humans are continuous with the rest of nature and** that **we rely** like other animals **on our senses to tell us how things are.** If humans are more successful than other animals, it is not because we possess special non-experiential ways of knowing, but because we are better at cooperating, collating, and inferring. In particular **we do not have any capacity for substantive a priori knowledge. There is no known mechanism by which such knowledge would be made possible.** This is an empirical claim.

**And,** all experiences are based on the badness of pain and the goodness of pleasure. **Nagel**:[[2]](#footnote-2)

I shall defend the unsurprising claim that **sensory pleasure is good and pain bad, no matter whose they are.** The point of the exercise is to see how the pressures of objectification operate in a simple case. Physical pleasure and pain do not usually depend on activities or desires which themselves raise questions of justification and value. They are just [is a] sensory experiences in relation to which we are fairly passive, but toward which we feel involuntary desire or aversion. Almost **everyone takes the avoidance of** his own **pain and** the **promotion** of his own **pleasure as subjective reason**s **for action** in a fairly simple way; they are not back up by any further reasons. On the other hand if someone pursues pain or avoids pleasure, either it as a means to some end or it is backed up by dark reasons like guilt or sexual masochism. What sort of general value, if any, ought to be assigned to pleasure and pain when we consider these facts from an objective standpoint? What kind of judgment can we reasonably make about these things when we view them in abstraction from who we are? We can begin by asking why **there is no plausibility in the zero position, that pleasure and pain have no value of any kind that can be objectively recognized.** That would mean that I have no reason to take aspirin for a severe headache, however I may in fact be motivated; and that looking at it from outside, you couldn't even say that someone had a reason not to put his hand on a hot stove, just because of the pain. Try looking at it from the outside and see whether you can manage to withhold that judgment. If the idea of objective practical reason makes any sense at all, so that there is some judgment to withhold, it does not seem possible. If the general arguments against the reality of objective reasons are no good, then **it is at least possible that I have a reason**, and not just an inclination, **to refrain from putting my hand on a hot stove.** But given the possibility, it seems meaningless to deny that this is so. Oddly enough, however, we can think of a story that would go with such a denial. It might be suggested that the aversion to pain is a useful phobia—having nothing to do with the intrinsic undesirability of pain itself—which helps us avoid or escape the injuries that are signaled by pain. (The same type of purely instrumental value might be ascribed to sensory pleasure: the pleasures of food, drink, and sex might be regarded as having no value in themselves, though our natural attraction to them assists survival and reproduction.) There would then be nothing wrong with pain in itself, and someone who was never motivated deliberately to do anything just because he knew it would reduce or avoid pain would have nothing the matter with him. He would still have involuntary avoidance reactions, otherwise it would be hard to say that he felt pain at all. And he would be motivated to reduce pain for other reasons—because it was an effective way to avoid the danger being signaled, or because interfered with some physical or mental activity that was important to him. He just wouldn't regard the pain as itself something he had any reason to avoid, even though he hated the feeling just as much as the rest of us. (And of course he wouldn't be able to justify the avoidance of pain in the way that we customarily justify avoiding what we hate without reason—that is, on the ground that even an irrational hatred makes its object very unpleasant!) There is nothing self-contradictory in this proposal, but it seems nevertheless insane. **Without some positive reason to think there is nothing in itself good or bad about having an experience you intensely like or dislike, we can't seriously regard the common impression to the contrary as a collective illusion.** Such things are at least good or bad for us, if anything is. What seems to be going on here is that we cannot from an objective standpoint withhold a certain kind of endorsement of the most direct and immediate subjective value judgments we make concerning the contents of our own consciousness. We regard ourselves as too close to those things to be mistaken in our immediate, nonideological evaluative impressions. No objective view we can attain could possibly overrule our subjective authority in such cases. There can be no reason to reject the appearances here.

Since people see their own happiness as good, they must see it as good for all people **Sayre-McCord**[[3]](#footnote-3)

**In valuing** something (**my happiness** or my rational nature, say), **there must be something I see as good about it.** Whatever **that feature** is, it **cannot be** simply **it being mine** or my getting it, **since** obviously **plenty of things that are mine**, or that I do get, **are not valuable** at all.However,whatever other feature it might be will be a property potentially possessed by things that are not mine. For instance, **if what is good about my happiness** (according to me) **is how it feels, then I am committed to thinking that this same feeling, if enjoyed by someone else, is good as well**

Additionally, prefer the standard:

**First,** equality among individuals proves util. **Cummiskey[[4]](#footnote-4)**:

If one truly believes that all rational beings have an equal value, then the rational solution to such a dilemma involves maximally promoting the lives and liberties of as many rational beings as possible (chapter 5). In order to avoid this conclusion, the non-consequentialist Kantian needs to justify agent-centered constraints. As we saw in chapter 1, however, even most Kantian deontologists recognize that agent-centered constraints require a non- value-based rationale. But we have seen that Kant’s normative theory is based on an unconditionally valuable end. How can a concern for the value of rational beings lead to a refusal to sacrifice rational beings even when this would prevent other more extensive losses of rational beings? If the moral law is based on the value of rational beings and their ends, then what is the rationale for prohibiting a moral agent from maximally promoting these two tiers of value? **If I sacrifice some for the sake of others,** I do not use them arbitrarily, and **I do not deny the unconditional value of rational beings.** Persons may have “dignity, that is, an unconditional and incomparable worth” that transcends any market value (GMM 436), but **persons** also **have a fundamental equality that dictates that some must sometimes give way for the sake of others** (chapters 5 and 7). The concept of the end-in-itself does not support the view that we may never force another to bear some cost in order to benefit others. **If one focuses on the equal value of all rational beings**, then equal consideration suggests that one may have to sacrifice some to save many.

**And,** Threats to bodily security and life preclude the ability for moral actors to effectively utilize and act upon other moral theories since they are in a constant state of crisis that inhibit the ideal moral conditions which other theories presuppose – so, my util offense outweighs theirs under their own framework

**Second,** Governments must use util. **Goodin**[[5]](#footnote-5)

Consider, first, the argument from necessity. **Public officials are obliged to make their choices under uncertainty**, and uncertainty of a very special sort at that. All choices – public and private alike – are made under some degree of uncertainty, of course. But in the nature of things, private individuals will usually have more complete information on the peculiarities of their own circumstances and on the ramifications that alternative possible choices might have for them. **Public officials**, in contrast, **are relatively poorly informed as to the effects that their choices will have on individuals, one by one. What they typically do know are generalities: averages and aggregates**. They know what will happen most often to most people as a result of their various possible choices. But that is all.**That is enough to allow public policy-makers to use the utilitarian calculus** – assuming they want to use it at all – **to choose general rules of conduct**. Knowing aggregates and averages, **they can** proceed to **calculate the utility payoffs from adopting each alternative possible general rule**. But they cannot be sure that the payoff will do to any given individual or on any particular occasion. Their knowledge of generalities, aggregates and averages is just not sufficiently fine-grained for that.

**Third,** the fission thought experiment proves that personal identity isn’t absolute. **Shoemaker 1**[[6]](#footnote-6)

By way of explanation, consider the case Parfit uses in support of his claim that identity is not what matters: fission (Ibid., 254–255). **Suppose both of my brain hemispheres are** functional **duplicates** of the other, **and** that each of my other two triplet brothers has suffered irreversible brain damage. **A** brilliant neuro**surgeon can transplant one of my brain hemispheres into [my triplet brothers]** each brother, and **so each** survivor (we will stipulate) **will be** fully **psychologically continuous with me** upon waking up. What has happened to me? If we lack the “no branching” clause, **we are forced to say that, because both** brothers **are psychologically continuous with me, they are both me. But then** (given the transitivity of identity) **both** survivors **would** also have to **be** identical to **each other, which seems obviously false** (although see Belzer 2005 for doubts about this assertion). So to avoid violating this transitivity requirement, we simply have to stipulate in our criterion of personal identity that, if the relations in which identity consists may hold one-many, they must obtain uniquely for identity itself to obtain. But then what has happened to me in fission? It seems I cannot survive as both, so the identity relation does not obtain between me and the survivors. In addition, there simply is no non-arbitrary reason why it should obtain between me and just one of the survivors, so the only remaining option is that I do not survive fission (see Parfit 2001, 42; see also Brink 1997b, 140–141). But is this like an ordinary case in which I don't survive, i.e., like death? Clearly not: both survivors will seem to remember my thoughts and experiences, they will fulfill intentions I had in action, they will have the same beliefs/desires/goals as me, and their characters will be exactly like mine. Indeed, it will be just as if I had survived. **Everything that matters** in ordinary survival (or nearly everything), therefore, **is preserved** in fission, **despite the fact that the identity relation is not.** What **[T]his** must **mean[s]**, then, is **that the identity relation just is not what matters** (or is not what matters very much) in survival; **instead, what matters [is]** has to consist in **psychological continuity** and/or connectedness (what Parfit calls “Relation R”). As long as that relation holds between me-now and some other person-stage — regardless of whether or not it holds one-one — what happens to me is just as good as ordinary survival. Call this the Identity Doesn't Matter (IDM) view.

This means the concept of “self ownership” and “independence” are both vacuous, because there is no such thing as an individual persons moral identity. Therefore this refutes all NCs premised in autonomy and individual choice.

This means util. **Shoemaker 2**

Extreme reductionism might lend support to utilitarianism in the following way. **Many** people **claim that we are justified in maximizing the good in our own lives, but not** justified in maximizing the good **across sets of lives, simply because each of us is a single,** deeply **unified person**, unified by the further fact of identity, whereas there is no such corresponding unity across sets of lives. But if **the only justification for the different treatment** of individual lives and sets of lives **is the** further **fact [of unity], and this fact is undermined by** the truth of **reductionism, then nothing justifies this different treatment.** There are no deeply unified subjects of experience. What remains are merely the experiences themselves, and so any ethical theory distinguishing between individual lives and sets of lives is mistaken. If the deep, further fact is missing, then there are no unities. **The morally significant units should then be the states people are in at particular times, and an ethical theory that focused on them** and attempted to improve their quality, whatever their location, **would be the most plausible. Utilitarianism is just such a theory.**

Next, contention

**I will by default advocate the United States requiring that all employers pay a living wage but will defend all just governments if that’s what he’d prefer. I’ll also further specify to a specific policy if asked to in cross-x.**

Advantage 1 Soft Power:

#### A higher minimum wage is key to US soft power Winkates 7[[7]](#footnote-7)

External perceptions of policy legitimacy directly enhance a nation’s soft power. Because of domestic and foreign policy choices made by the U.S. government and even private business, America starts out disadvantaged in terms of perceived **il**legitimacy. The cutting difference is not the “rightness” or “wrongness” of the policy choices; rather it is that U.S. public and private decision selections are often at variance with the larger international community. National policy on capital punishment and gun ownership, for example, put America in a minority of governments on those issues. 15 With only 3% of world population, the U.S. uses nearly 25% of global petroleum supplies and we appear more self-indulgent in refusing to limit production of gas-guzzling vehicles. The U.S. has rejected the scientific validity of global warming, choosing not to sign the Kyoto environmental treaty. America has been very slow in raising the federal minimum wage as inflation has eroded previous income gains. The federal and state governments virtually ignore 43 million citizens who have no medical insurance whatever. Local governments and school systems often sidestep teaching evolution in schools.The corporate world turns a blind eye to extraordinary compensation and retirement packages for chief executive officers, compounded by the near-total loss of many company retirement accounts amid systemic greed, fraud, and embezzlement.The hard edges of capitalism, as practiced in U.S. business circles, diminish employer/employee loyalty and do not provide the “safety nets” common in other advanced industrial cultures to cushion layoffs, insure against major medical problems, and subsidize child care. In the foreign policy arena, the titanic defense of Israel and its settlement policy, the widely perceived indifference to Palestinian suffering, resort to “extraordinary rendition” of suspected terrorists, the persistent and public disparagement of the United Nations, and the preference for unilateral responses to perceived threats **take a toll**. **There is a price to pay in** external perceptions of arrogance, selfishness, and inequity that undergird **soft power**.

#### Soft power is declining now – changes in economic policy are uniquely key to solve Fukuyama 14[[8]](#footnote-8)

The problem as I see it is to define a different way of integrating economics and politics that avoids the exuberant neo-liberalism of the 1990s, while at the same time avoiding a return to growth-undermining populist or redistributive policies. No one to date in the United States or Europe has clearly articulated what such a model would be. It would have to dethrone growth as the single measure of the performance of the economy and raise the priority of employment and even distribution. It would have to define a new, larger role for the state, particularly in the regulation of financial markets. It would need to focus on middle-class employment, and perhaps consider ways of channeling innovation into labor-utilizing innovation. It would explicitly target preservation of a manufacturing base and keeping supply chains geographically close to the United States. Internationally, definition of such a model will be important in maintaining American leadership and “soft power.” Because of Wall Street’s failures, the neo-liberal model has been discredited around the world, and countries such as Brazil and Argentina are falling back into bad habits with regard to industrial policy and subsidization. The United States needs to figure out how to modify its neo-liberal model, owning up to past excesses but preserving the core of an open international order. Free trade and deregulation cannot be our only goals; **indeed,** re-regulation **of the international banking sector** is a critical requirement if we are to avoid another financial crisis of the sort we suffered five years ago. But neither domestic stability nor the projection of soft power abroad will be possible without a different approach to economic policy.

**And,** soft power is key to winning the war on terror. **Judt**[[9]](#footnote-9)

**in ’02**

**If the United States is to win its war on terror,** if it is to succeed in its assertion of world leadership, **it is going to need the help and understanding of others, particularly** in **dealing with** poor Arab and **Muslim states** and others resentful at their own backwardness. This is perfectly obvious. International police actions and the regulation and oversight of intercontinental movements of currency, goods, and people require international cooperation. **"Failed states," in whose detritus terrorists flourish, need to be rebuilt**—the U.S. is culpably uninterested in this task and no longer much good at it, in depressing contrast to its performance after 1945. America does the bombing, but the complicated and dangerous work of reconstruction is left to others. **The E**uropean **U**nion (including its candidate members) **currently contributes ten times more peacekeeping troops worldwide than the U.S.,** and in Kosovo, Bosnia, Albania, Sierra Leone, and elsewhere the Europeans have taken more military casualties than the U.S.. Fifty-five percent of the world's development aid and two thirds of all grants-in-aid to the poor and vulnerable nations of the globe come from the European Union. As a share of GNP, U.S. foreign aid is barely one third the European average. If you combine European spending on defense, foreign aid, intelligence gathering, and policing—all of them vital to any sustained war against international crime—it easily matches the current American defense budget. Notwithstanding the macho preening that sometimes passes for foreign policy analysis in contemporary Washington, **the United States is utterly dependent on friends and allies in order to achieve its goals.** If America is to get and keep foreign support, **it is going to have to learn to wield** what Nye calls "**soft power.**" Grand talk of a new American Empire is illusory, Nye believes: another misleading historical allusion to put with "Vietnam" and "Munich" in the catalog of abused analogies. In Washington today one hears loud boasts of unipolarity and hegemony, but the fact, Nye writes, is that The success of U.S. primacy will depend not just on our military or economic might but also on the soft power of our culture and values and on policies that make others feel they have been consulted and their interests have been taken into account. Talk about empire may dazzle us and mislead us into thinking we can go it alone.[ Soft power, in Nye's usage, sounds a lot like common sense, and would have seemed that way to every post-war American administration from Harry Truman to George Bush Sr. **If you want others to want what you want, you need** to make them feel included. **Soft power** is about influence, example, credibility, and reputation. The Soviet Union, in Nye's account, lost it in the course of its invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1956 and 1968. America's soft power is enhanced by the openness and energy of its society; it is diminished by needlessly crass behavior, like Bush's blunt assertion that the Kyoto agreement was "dead."

Terrorists’ love for destruction creates existential threats. **Lippman ’03[[10]](#footnote-10)**

The contemporary era has ushered in a "new terrorism." n44 Terrorist groups, in the past, generally possessed coherent ideological platforms and aspirations and selected targets which advanced and symbolized these goals. n45 They were sensitive to the need to maintain political legitimacy and avoided intentionally targeting innocents. n46 The "new terrorists," in **[\*303]** contrast, are driven by an apocalyptic and millenarian religiously-based worldview which posits that the world must be destroyed in order to cleanse the globe of paganism and impurity. n47 This predisposes contemporary terrorists to develop and to deploy nuclear, biological and chemical weapons (NBC) of mass destruction (WMD), n48 which are increasingly available in the global marketplace. n49 The trend is towards increasingly lethal terrorist incidents and an escalating number of fatalities. n50 This is encouraged by the enhanced technological sophistication of terrorists n51 who increasingly are drawn from the ranks of amateur attackers who lack the capacity to carefully calibrate and to control the consequences of their violent conduct. n52¶ The spectacular incident also has become the currency of the contemporary terrorists who are caught in a spiral of ever-more dramatic acts of violence to attract media and public attention and to draw the young and impressionable to their ranks. n53 The tightly organized, hierarchical terrorist organization has been replaced by fluid, decentralized and specialized cells which temporarily cooperate and coalesce around particular projects. n54 The individuals involved often lack clear organizational identities and increasingly fail to claim credit or to offer an explanation for the attack. n55 Terrorists also increasingly transcend national boundaries and rely on technology to coordinate and cooperate in their **[\*304]** operations and to carry out operations across the globe. n56 Terrorist groups also rely on a far-flung, sophisticated and difficult to penetrate international financial networks which involve cooperation with drug cartels and petty criminals and other illegitimate enterprises as well as with legitimate charitable organizations, mining interests, currency traders and businesses. n57¶ This new terrorism also is associated with the advent of the "super-terrorist," n58 individuals characterized by a megalomaniacal desire to leave a historically unprecedented mark of mass devastation and death. n59 These pernicious personalities are distinguished by a fascination with technological innovation and implementation rather than by a strong commitment to a political cause. n60 Destruction rather than doctrine is the animating aspect of their activity. n61 The sadistic "super-terrorist" thus belies the conventional conception of terrorists as reasonable and rationale individuals who have adopted violent tactics in order to achieve limited political objectives. n62

And, Extinction comes first under any ethical theory **Bostrom**[[11]](#footnote-11)

These reflections on **moral uncertainty suggest[s]** an alternative, complementary way of looking at existential risk. Let me elaborate. Our [**that** our] present understanding of axiology might well be confused. **We may not** now **know**—at least not in concrete detail—**what outcomes would count as a big win for humanity;** we might not even yet be able to imagine the best ends of our journey. **If we are** indeed profoundly **uncertain about our** ultimate **aims,** then we should recognize that **there is** a **great** option **value in preserving**—and ideally improving—**our ability to recognize value and to steer the future accordingly. Ensuring that there will be a future version of humanity** with great powers and a propensity to use them wisely **is** plausibly **the best way** available to us **to increase the probability that the future will contain** a lot of **value.**

This also precludes skep because Bostrom says that since there’s always a chance we’ll end up being able to find moral truth at some point in the future we need to preserve the species to give ourselves the ability to do so.

Additionally, all moral theories value their own implementation. The only reason deontology is valuable, for example, is because it causes people to actually treat other people as ends. This is not the fallacy of origin: if morality didn’t value its own application it would cease to guide action and lose normativity. Extinction comes first then because people being a live is a pre-requisite to morality making demands.

Advantage 2 Mexico

Increased minimum wages in the US empirically lead to outsourcing JACOBE 06[[12]](#footnote-12)

Well, in an economic analysis, there is no real justification for the minimum wage. In fact, it inhibits the free market. In that kind of analysis, there are always companies on the margin paying the minimum wage, and some [companies] of those will go out of business if their labor costs increase. My guess is that there are few such companies left. Most of these companies have probably already replaced their minimum wage employees, or will do so soon, by going to one of the other two sources of cheap labor -- job outsourcing overseas or hiring illegal immigrants who don't have any choice in the wages and benefits they earn. So if that's true, then based on the results of our most recent survey of small-business owners, the Wells Fargo/Gallup Small Business Index, the real economic effect ought to be basically minimal, if there's any at all. So, the real cost of a reasonable increase of minimum wage probably is not significant because U.S. minimum wage laws have effectively been undercut by the global labor market and illegal immigration. Now, you can argue that if you keep increasing it really rapidly over a period of time, that at some point it will become binding.

That outsourcing will largely be to Mexico, means more jobs in Mexico and lower unemploymentUNM 13[[13]](#footnote-13)

**Outsourcing to Mexico is becoming** an **attractive** choice **for U.S. businesses** **due to proximity, free trade agreements, and protection of intellectual property.** The U.S. and Mexican governments are more closely aligned in political and economic values resulting in similar cultures that make doing business with each other easier and less prone to serious incidents. Not only is alignment of values important, but **the close proximity** of the two countries **offers** other benefits such as **better communication due to easier travel and similar time zones, collaboration, productivity, and overall lower risk**. Mexico pays higher wages than China, but **outsourcing to Mexico reduces** other **costs** such as travel, having to work odd or extra hours to communicate with faraway employees in China, and stationing personnel at Chinese locations. Mexico has also invested in the education of their people, so skilled labor needed for outsourcing activities is abundant. The Mexican economy is growing and is expected to become one of the top ten largest economies. Proponents of outsourcing in Mexico point out that Mexico has global experience, a sound infrastructure, and political and economic stability, which are attractive to foreign investment.

**Mexican drug cartels are uniquely fueled by Mexican unemployment**

RAMSEY 12[[14]](#footnote-14)

Reports that the number of **unemployed youths in Mexico stands at 8 million** and is set to rise are bad news for security, as **this group makes up the majority of combatants** and victims **in the country's drug war**. Excelsior published a report saying that there are currently 8 million Mexicans aged 18 to 30 who are not in work or education – known as “ni-nis” (so labeled because they neither study nor work, "ni estudian ni trabajan"). This is equivalent to more than 20 percent of the age group, and is on the rise, according to the newspaper. InSight Crime Analysis The high level of youth **unemployment [drives]** in Mexico is not only a social problem but a factor driving **violence and organized crime**. Ni-nis are the main prey of drug trafficking organizations, **making** **up the majority of victims of drug-related violence, and** also **serve as** the pool from which they draw **their workforce**, commonly serving **as** the **expendable foot soldiers of gangs and cartels. Crime pays**; an enforcer for a large cartel can make nearly three times as much per month as the national average, as demonstrated by the story of six female adolescent Zetas-in-training captured last year. Many in the country have argued that **the government should address** the problem of youth **unemployment as a matter of national security. In a country where economic opportunities are few** and far between, it is argued, **young people have little choice but to turn to criminal groups for income.**

Drug cartels undermine Mexican stability **Farwell and Rohozinski 13**[[15]](#footnote-15)

Those worried about tens of thousands of innocent civilian deaths in Syria might better focus their time, energy and resources on helping a nation where tens of thousands have also died, but whose fate directly and immediately affects U.S. and Canadian security. That nation is Mexico. Since 2008, the seven main **drug cartels have emerged as an existential threat to Mexico’s future**. **Cartels** like Los Zetas, which recruit members from Mexico’s Special Forces and federal police, **behave like organized paramilitaries, not ordinary criminals**. They generate perhaps $30 to $40 billion a year in illicit profits. And the price has been horrendous. Between 2007 and 2012, around 47,000 Mexicans were killed in the drug war. Some estimate that the true toll is over 60,000. When we think of **torture, beheadings and assassination**, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia come to mind. Many Americans and Canadians would be surprised to learn that these **are commonplace in Mexico**, a country many associate with beaches and margaritas. Yet **the situation in Mexico has deteriorated so badly that one Juarez mayor** and a newspaper publisher took up residence in Texas, while one journalist **took refuge** in Canada. As neighbors, **we should be concerned**. But there’s even more to it than that: The **drug cartels pose a direct threat to American** and Canadian **security**. American media reports indicate that the cartels have a presence in Texas high schools and have even hired U.S. soldiers as hitmen. The U.S. Justice Department has indicated that the cartels have a presence in at least 230 American cities. Texas governor Rick Perry and Arizona governor Jan Brewer have long complained that violent criminals from Mexico are crossing the border and threatening American families. According to Canadian law enforcement officials, Mexican cartels are joining forces with Canadian organized crime around illicit activities including money laundering. **There are alleged ties between Mexican drug cartels and Hezbollah. There is a real threat** and danger **of** the emergence of a hemispheric criminal compact with **linkages to** broader, **more sinister networks in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East**. The challenge is not amenable to easy solutions or quick fixes. Mexican leaders remain angry that President George W. Bush retreated from his pledge to continue the ban on assault weapons. The cartels exploited the lapse to purchase AK-47s and heavy arms and adapt them into even more deadly weapons.

Mexican instability causes massive global oil shocks **Moran ‘9** writes[[16]](#footnote-16)

**A story receiving** more **attention** in the American media than Iraq these days **is** the **horrific drug**-related **violence across** the **northern states of Mexico**, where Felipe Calderon has deployed the national army to combat two thriving drug cartels, which have compromised the national police beyond redemption. The tales of carnage are horrific, to be sure: 30 people were killed in a 48 hour period last week in Cuidad Juarez alone, a city located directly across the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas. So far, the impact on the United States and beyond has been minimal. But there also isn’t much sign that the army is winning, either, and that raises a disturbing question: What if Calderon loses? The CIA’s worst nightmare during the Cold War (outside of an administration which forced transparency on it, of course) was the radicalization or collapse of Mexico. The template then was communism, but narco-capitalism doesn’t look much better. The prospect of a wholesale collapse that sent millions upon millions of Mexican refugees fleeing across the northern border so far seems remote. But Mexico’s army has its own problems with corruption, and a sizeable number of Mexicans regard Calderon’s razor-thin 2006 electoral victory over a leftist rival as illegitimate. **With Mexico’s economy reeling and the** traditional **safety valve of** illegal **immigration to America dwindling, the potential for serious trouble exists.** Meanwhile, **Mexico ranks with Saudi Arabia and Canada as the three suppliers of oil the U**nited **S**tates **could not do without. Should things come unglued** there and Pemex production shut down even temporarily, **the shock on oil markets could be profound,** again, **sending** its **waves throughout the global economy.** Long-term, PEMEX production has been sliding anyway, thanks to oil fields well-beyond their peak and restrictions on foreign investment. Domestically in the U.S., any trouble involving Mexico invariably will cause a bipartisan demand for more security on the southern border, inflame anti-immigrant sentiment and possibly force Obama to remember his campaign promise to “renegotiate NAFTA,” a pledge he deftly sidestepped once in office.

Oil shocks cause **extinction** Lendman ‘7[[17]](#footnote-17)

**With** the world's energy supplies finite, **the US heavily dependent on imports, and "peak oil" near** or approaching, **"security" for America means assuring a sustainable supply of what we can't do without. It includes waging wars to get it**, protect it, and defend the maritime trade routes over which it travels. **That means** energy's partnered with predatory New World Order globalization, **militarism, wars, ecological recklessness, and** now **an extremist US administration willing to risk Armageddon** for world dominance. Central **to** its plan is first **control**ling essential resources everywhere, at any cost, starting with **oil** and where most of it is located in the Middle East and Central Asia. The New "Great Game" and Perils From It The new "Great Game's" begun, but this time the stakes are greater than ever as explained above. The old one lasted nearly 100 years pitting the British empire against Tsarist Russia when the issue wasn't oil. This time, **it's the US with** help from **Israel,** Britain, the West, and satellite states like Japan, **South Korea and Taiwan challenging Russia and China with today's weapons** and technology on both sides making earlier ones look like toys. At stake is more than oil. It's planet earth with survival of all life on it issue number one twice over. **Resources and wars for them means militarism is increasing**, peace declining, and the planet's ability to sustain life front and center, if anyone's paying attention. They'd better be because beyond the point of no return, there's no second chance the way Einstein explained after the atom was split. His famous quote on future wars was : "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."  Under a worst case scenario, it's more dire than that. **There may be nothing left** but resilient beetles and bacteria **in the wake of a nuclear holocaust** meaning even a new stone age is way in the future, if at all. The threat is real and once nearly happened during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October, 1962. We later learned a miracle saved us at the 40th anniversary October, 2002 summit meeting in Havana attended by the US and Russia along with host country Cuba. For the first time, we were told how close we came to nuclear Armageddon. Devastation was avoided only because Soviet submarine captain Vasily Arkhipov countermanded his order to fire nuclear-tipped torpedos when Russian submarines were attacked by US destroyers near Kennedy's "quarantine" line. Had he done it, only our imagination can speculate what might have followed and whether planet earth, or at least a big part of it, would have survived.

Underviews

**1)** all neg theory must be weighed against the side bias. The neg won 7 percent[[18]](#footnote-18) more rounds this year at quarters and octas bid and a majority of rounds at all those tournaments so something I do that is slightly abusive is actually good because it just corrects for the side bias.

**2)** No 2NR theory or metatheory-a) It skews my time because the I only have 3 minutes to respond to 6 minutes so he has more time on the theory debate b) no judge will vote on a 2ar rvi so it’s a no risk issue that can eat up the little amount of time I have. If we each spend a minute on theory the skew will be 5-2 which is worse than 6-3. **And,** no 2NR RVIs – they could always collapse to theory in the 2N with long scripts I couldn’t have predicted since the justification wasn’t there when I made my choice, that’s strat skew.

**3)** If the negative runs more than one shell, the neg must concede that I get an RVI. **Time skew**: Forcing me to read a counter-interp on each shell in order to get offense skews my 1ar time since I have to engage a substantial amount of time reading a counterinterpretation and beating back each shell. This is compounded by the fact that I can’t win on any shells, so I am forced to devote 2+ minutes of my 1ar beating back theory that I can’t win on. Even if I can run shells in the 1AR I have a limited time to set up nuanced and developed shells meaning 1AR theory doesn’t solve. Time skew is key because my ability to respond to arguments dictates my ability to win.  Further, this structurally precludes any of their theoretical arguments because running multiple shells without giving me an rvi skews my ability to engage their shells, so you can’t know who is winning the abuse story because your evaluation of theory as a judge has been skewed.

4) Aff gets rvis on topicality. Key to reciprocity since topicality is something only the neg has acess to so absent an RVI the neg has a structural advantage from topicality as a no risk issue. RVIs solve because they make topicality bidirectional.

5) The neg must link all offense to a prohibition on requiring employers to pay a living wage. Key to reciprocity since otherwise he has at least a 4-1 advnatage with prohibition, permissibility, k’s, and topical counterplans. Additionally, prohibition is most reciprocal since it's the opposite of an obligation so its most likely that they are equally difficult to prove. Key to fairness since it ensures equal access to the ballot .

6) Fairness is a voter and gateway issue because it frames your evaluation of substantive issues. This also means it comes before skep because you can’t even tell that he is wining skep if the round was unfair.

#### A living wage is key to democratic participation Heck 2/28 [[19]](#footnote-19)

On Tuesday, inside the State Capitol, Minnesotans rallied for a minimum wage hike. It was a rollicking good time with great speeches, music, call-and-response exhortation and lots and lots of signage. Participants made the case for a minimum wage increase’s positive economic impact on workers’, families’ and communities’ lives. Notably absent from the rally? A lot more minimum wage-earning workers. Why? Because they can’t afford to take the time off from work to advocate for democratic change. This raises an interesting, troubling question. If low and modest wage workers are too financially stressed to cast a ballot**, attend a community meeting** or advocate for policy change, are the resulting elections, meeting outcomes and policy proposals truly representative? Democracy requires citizen participation. We don’t enjoy pure democracy, where everyone gets together and decides everything. In a nation of 300-plus million and a state of 5.3 million, the pure Athenian democracy is functionally unworkable. Instead, we practice representative democracy. We hold regular elections, choosing leaders to create public policy and enact laws on our behalf. Our nation’s founding fathers were not terrifically concerned with the political participation of anyone outside of their class. Democracy, to them, meant men of means creating public laws that treated men of means equally. Wealth and property were understood to be reasonable requirements of citizenship’s responsibilities and rights. The North American landed gentry weren’t completely oblivious to the rising mechanics’ and small farmers’ concerns. Suffrage, the right to vote gained through democratic process, accommodated voting rights expansion. Still, the right to vote and casting a vote**,** much less broadly participating in our democracy’s time consuming nuance, are two very different things. Democracy theory is easy. Everyone has the right to vote, therefore everyone should vote. Electoral outcome legitimacy flows from this faith. That’s the theory. Practice, on the other hand, is not. Voting participation positively correlates with wealth**,** home ownership, education and age. Young people don’t vote to the same degree that older people vote. If you’re over 30, own a home, hold a college degree and earn at least the median income, you vote. Begin eliminating those factors and voting participation drops. Low income, no post-secondary education and renting shelter reflect economic barriers to individual, family and community stability. Voting, for someone living on the margins, becomes a luxury rather than a civic responsibility. Minnesota’s legislature is considering a bill that raises Minnesota’s minimum hourly wage from $6.15, past the federal $7.25 minimum to $9.50. It will affect almost 360,000 Minnesota workers. Better than half of those are women. $9.50 an hour increases family income but it won’t significantly reduce the draw on public social safety net programs for low income, working Minnesotans. That step requires an annual income north of $30,000, translating to $15/hour or more. Last month, the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry updated its minimum wage report, reflecting 2013 wage data. It reveals, in ways small and large, minimum wage work’s reality. The most significant, big-picture-economy finding observes that minimum wage’s inflation adjusted purchasing power has declined by over30 percent since 1974. This means that for people performing minimum wage work, climbing out of poverty, based on full-time minimum wage work’s purchasing power is almost a third harder today than it was 40 years ago. Mountains are supposed to crumble over time, not grow taller. The DLI report finds that an increasingly smaller number of Minnesota workers earn the $7.25/hour minimum wage. That’s good news but the problem is that a growing number of workers aren’t earning much beyond minimum**.** Minnesota’s food service industry employs 125,000 hourly workers. About one third of those were paid minimum wage or less. Almost half of Minnesota’s minimum wage-earning hourly work force work in eating and drinking establishments. Among all Minnesota hourly wage employees, 6.6 percent are women. Roughly calculated, working 40 hours a week at $7.50 an hour results in $300 in gross earnings. That’s not take-home pay but money earned before taxes and withholding. And on top of this, low and minimum wage workers off-set reduced earnings purchasing power by working an additional part-time job or two. Consequently, asking a minimum wage worker to join a State Capitol advocacy rally means relinquishing income. **Four hours away from work, at minimum wage,** is $30. That might not seem like much to folks earning Minnesota’s $57,000 median family income but $30 is **ten percent of $300 of weekly gross earnings**. Structurally, minimum and low wage **hourly** pay reduces the likelihood of participating in voting, advocacy, opposition and the exercise of democracy’s promise. It further concentrates the impact of higher income interests through disproportionately representative concentration. Our democracy becomes, as a result, less democratic.

#### Democratic backsliding is occurring now Diamond 9[[20]](#footnote-20)

Concern about the future **of democracy** is further warranted by the gathering signs of a democratic recession, even before the onset of the global economic recession. During the past decade, the global expansion of democracy has essentially leveled off and hit an equilibrium While freedom (political rights and civil liberties) continued to expand throughout the post-Cold War era, that progress also halted in 2006, and 2007 and 2008 were the worst consecutive years for freedom since the end of the Cold War, with the number of countries declining in freedom greatly outstripping the number that improved. Two-thirds of all the breakdowns of democracy since the third wave began in 1974 have occurred in the last nine years, and in a number of strategically important states like Russia, Nigeria, Venezuela, Pakistan and Thailand. Many of these countries have not really returned to democracy. And a number of countries linger in a twilight zone between democracy and authoritarianism. While normative support for democracy has grown around the world, it remains in many countries, tentative and uneven, or is even eroding under the weight of growing public cynicism about corruption and the self-interested behavior of parties and politicians. Only about half of the public, on average, in Africa and Asia meets a rigorous, multidimensional test of support for democracy. Levels of distrust for political institutions—particularly political parties and legislatures, and politicians in general—are very high in Eastern Europe and Latin America, and in parts of Asia. In many countries, 30-50 percent of the public or more is willing to consider some authoritarian alternative to democracy, such as military or one-man rule. And where governance is bad or elections are rigged and the public cannot rotate leaders out of power, skepticism and defection from democracy grow. Of the roughly 80 new democracies that have emerged during the third wave and are still standing, probably close to three-quarters are insecure and could run some risk of reversal during adverse global and domestic circumstances. Less at risk—and probably mostly consolidated—are the more established developing country democracies (India, Costa Rica, Botswana, Mauritius), and the more liberal democracies of this group: the ten postcommunist states that have been admitted to the EU; Korea and Taiwan; Chile, Uruguay, Panama, Brazil, probably Argentina; a number of liberal island states in the Caribbean and Pacific. This leaves about 50 democracies and near democracies—including such big and strategically important states as Turkey, Ukraine, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Africa, certainly Pakistan and Bangladesh, and possibly even Mexico—where the survival of constitutional rule cannot be taken for granted. In some of these countries, like South Africa, the demise of democracy would probably come, if it happened, not as a result of a blatant overthrow of the current system, but rather via a gradual executive strangling of political pluralism and freedom, or a steady decline in state capacity and political order due to rising criminal and ethnic violence. Such circumstances would also swallow whatever hopes exist for the emergence of genuine democracy in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan and for the effective restoration of democracy in countries like Thailand and Nepal.

Democracy is key to solving multiple scenarios for extinction. **Diamond 95**[[21]](#footnote-21)

“**Nuclear, chemical and biological weapons continue to proliferate.** The very source of **life on Earth**, the global ecosystem, **appears increasingly endangered**. **Most** of these new and unconventional **threats** to security **are associated with** or aggravated by **the weakness or absence of democracy,** with its provisions for legality, accountability, popular sovereignty and openness. The experience of this century offers important lessons. **Countries that govern themselves in a truly democratic fashion do not go to war with one another.** They do not **aggress against their neighbors** to aggrandize themselves or glorify their leaders. Democratic governments do not ethnically "cleanse" their own populations, and they are much less likely to face ethnic insurgency. Democracies do not **sponsor terrorism** against one another. They do not **build weapons of mass destruction** to use on or to threaten one another. **Democratic countries form more reliable**, open, and enduring **trading partnerships**. In the long run they **offer better** and more stable **climates for investment.** They **[and] are more environmentally responsible because they must answer to their own citizens**

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